

SEEN & HEARD

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SERVICES FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH & THEIR FAMILIES • THE DELAWARE CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT

CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT STAFF PROVIDES RELIEF FOR HURRICANE VICTIMS

Whether raising money through a simple bake sale, gathering much-needed items from co-workers and local stores, or serving their country through the Armed Forces, employees of the Children's Department played an important part in the hurricane relief efforts.



*This house is one of the many destroyed during the record-breaking hurricane season.
Photo courtesy of Steve Yeatman.*

YRC Supervisor at Stevenson House, also organized a fundraiser. She and other Stevenson House staff raised \$650 towards the Save our Children Victim's Fund, sponsored by WBOC (TV Channel 16).

In addition to raising money, employees chose to donate specific items to hurricane victims. Madeline "Micky" Hooven of YRS and Cathy Montefusco of CMH worked together to obtain contributions. They received hair and personal care products from local stores and clothing, household items, shoes, blankets, books, children's videos and baby products from co-workers. Community Services youth distributed flyers soliciting donations, sorted and boxed the donations, and transported over 11 boxes of goods to a local warehouse where the items were then sent to the Gulf Coast.

"I just feel like the people affected by the hurricane lost everything, including family members, and they needed some help getting back on their feet," said Montefusco. "We all take so much for granted—having clean clothes, being able to take a shower or brush our teeth, seeing our friends and family or just being able to make dinner or go to bed when you want. It's hard to imagine having all of that taken away and it could happen to any of us at anytime."

Youth at Camelot and Mowlds Cottage organized car washes while the girls at Grace Cottage held a bake sale in order to raise money for the American Red Cross. Their efforts produced over \$660 in donations. Adrienne Washington,

While many helped out close to home, others were sent to the devastated areas to provide firsthand assistance. Richard Powell of YRS served in Louisiana for a month with the Army Reserves helping victims of Katrina.

"Many times the media focused only on the city of New Orleans but the small towns were even more ravaged," Powell said. "It was difficult to look at a pile of debris that was once a family's home."

Hal Miller, from the MIS Unit, and Steve Yeatman, an FCT supervisor in the Office of Prevention and Early Intervention, also served in the Katrina and Rita relief efforts.† Miller, a Staff Sergeant in the 261st Signal Brigade, served as an Information Systems Chief. He worked at the Joint Operation Center in Caravel, La., to ensure that the communication systems were adequately functioning and to install more systems as they were needed.

Yeatman, a Master Sergeant in the 56th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, served as a liaison between the Pennsylvania National Guard and all Federal Departments (i.e. Homeland Security, DOT, FEMA, National Weather Service, etc.) and Louisiana State Departments. Stationed in the Federal Joint Field Office, he worked with the above mentioned groups to organize plans to get people basic necessities while providing comfort and support.

"I was proud to have been able to lend a hand to our fellow Americans in their time of need and hope that we, in Delaware, never have to experience a tragedy of that magnitude," Powell added.



Boys from Mowlds Cottage washed cars in an effort to raise money for the American Red Cross.

MARC RICHMAN ACCEPTS POSITION AS DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR CHILD MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

After spending twelve years with the Department in various roles, Marc Richman, Ph.D. recently accepted the position of deputy director for the Division of Child Mental Health Services.

Richman joined CMH as a child psychologist and within three years he was promoted to a supervisory position. During his tenure, he has been the principle liaison for CMH with the Family Court and has played a vital role in the development of a protocol for assessing youth with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity disorder.



Marc Richman has taken on a new role at the Department as Deputy Director for CMH.

"Dr. Richman brings with him a wide breadth of skills and experiences with children and youth from a very young age through adulthood," said CMH Director, Susan Cycyk. "The position of deputy director has been vacant for longer than the three years I have been here, so this is an exciting new venture for our division."

In his new role, Richman will administer much of the Division's operations, including Silver Lake and Terry Center Treatment facilities and network administration.

"I am looking forward to being able to help the division remain focused on doing what we do best—serving children with mental health and substance abuse problems," he said. "I see the Deputy role as being critical in assuring that our operations run as smooth as they can, and our staff gets the resources they need to allow them to serve our children and families."

REVEREND RIVERS RETURNS TO WILMINGTON TO COMBAT VIOLENCE

The Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families' Office of Prevention and Early Intervention recently hosted two special sessions with Rev. Eugene Rivers, III, Inner City Minister/Youth Advocate. The central theme of his morning discussion, which was presented to the Department's probation officers, was based on his experience with Boston's *Ten Point Coalition*, an effort by more than 50 local churches to join forces with the Boston police and combat youth violence.



Rev. Rivers delivered a powerful message while meeting with members of the Wilmington Interfaith Coalition.

He stressed the vital role probation officers played in redirecting the energies of probate youth and he encouraged those in attendance to view themselves as agents of change and to develop strategic partnerships with the faith community.

After the morning session, Rivers met with members of the Wilmington Interfaith Coalition, a group of faith-based organizations that is focusing on violence prevention and youth development. The goal of this meeting was to further discuss ways to reduce violence within the City and to encourage grassroots mobilization of faith communities to collaborate with law enforcement and other members of the criminal justice community.

"Any plan should be stripped to three basic elements," Rivers said. "Keeping young people alive, making them literate and finding them jobs."

Rivers' job is to fine-tune the Wilmington model and periodically meet with the Interfaith Coalition to continue lending his expertise on mobilizing this effort.



MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY

People often compare their work place to a sports team. Each person in the organization has a specific role and in order for there to be success, it takes a consorted effort by all players.

I see a similar comparison with the System of Care philosophy. Each person involved in a child's life has a specific role and possesses certain "talents" that enable a child to grow and flourish. It's important for each person—be it a social worker, a parent, a grandparent, a teacher or a counselor—to not only understand their role, but the roles of the other players. It takes cohesiveness and understanding in order to reach the ultimate goal: a child who is safe, stable, possesses self-esteem, and a sense of hope for the future.

I'm extremely proud of the winning team at the Children's Department. Every day, our workers go into the field and fight for our children. I'm also proud of our special team of dedicated partners, who step in and lend a hand when we need it. We couldn't succeed without their support. In our last issue, you read about one of our great wins. Jacob was the first foster child from Delaware to be admitted into the prestigious Milton Hershey School. In this issue, we acknowledge his permanency worker, Nicole Rose. Her dedication and ability to be a team player played a vital role in Jacob's success. You'll also read about the compassion our employees exuded in the aftermath of hurricane's Rita and Katrina, and the triumph shared by members of the Foster Care RFP team. Team work is evident through all the pages of our fall newsletter and it's evident in the numerous victories we've witnessed over the past 5 years.

Through rigorous training and continual practice, the Children's Department is truly embracing the System of Care approach. We have developed a robust continuum of care; we are serving more children in their homes and communities; and we are better addressing the needs of an increasing number of children with more complex challenges. As we move closer to a new year, may we begin another winning season!

Cari DeSantis

Cari DeSantis,
Cabinet Secretary

SAVE THE DATE!

The Delaware Children's Department
16th Annual Prevention & Early Intervention Forum
April 24 - 25, 2006
(Location to be determined)

DEPARTMENT CONTINUES TO GROW A SYSTEM OF CARE

The Children's Department has taken another two steps forward in the System of Care (SOC) journey through two recent training initiatives.

In early September, the Department sponsored training entitled, "System of Care: The Role of the Judiciary and Legal System." The program was presented and facilitated by Lillian Brooks, JD, director of court services, and Ret. Judge Steven Rideout both of Alexandria, VA. Secretary DeSantis and Chief Judge Kuhn welcomed participants, who included Family Court Judges and Commissioners, representatives from the Attorney General's Office, Public Defender's Office, Office of the Child Advocate and the Children's Department.

The training provided an overview of Delaware's vision for SOC, reviewed promising SOC practice principles throughout the nation and presented a detailed overview of the Virginia model. It also highlighted the components needed to build a better collaborative effort. Afternoon breakout sessions focused on determining the level of awareness and SOC buy-in among participants and allowed participants to become aware of their strengths and challenges in adopting the SOC philosophy.

The second training initiative was aimed at helping Department staff "Lead the SOC Team." Ria Hawkins, of Take Charge Consultants, designed a four-module program, which includes a train-the-trainer component that enables Department staff to replicate all or portions of the training.

Many of the almost 110 participants were from Division of Child Mental Health Services, Division of Family Services and Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services. Community partners who attended the training included representatives from Department of Education, Department of



(L to R) Lillian Brooks and Chief Judge Steven Rideout meet with Chief Judge Kuhn and Secretary DeSantis following their presentation on "System of Care: The role of the judiciary and legal system."

Health and Social Services, Delaware Federation of Families, Children and Families First and Delaware Guidance.

"Growing a System of Care is a process that will take time and the SOC training is a strength-based approach that helps us along the journey to learn skills, share our experiences and try something new," said Mike Dencker, Division of Child Mental Health Services.

Those involved in the training were taught a myriad of skills needed in order to successfully work in an SOC environment. Those skills included: an interest-based approach to collaboration; a 6-step process to help resolve conflict through consensus; intervention techniques aimed at improving team effectiveness; and a step-by-step approach to coaching, which will be a critical piece for many of the supervisors and other participants who will take on the role of coach with their staff and peers to ensure the success of SOC.

"The Department should consider building on this training by having the training groups periodically meet as focus groups," said Dave Desmond, Division of Family Services. "[This will allow them to] continue to develop their relationships and discuss successes/barriers they have encountered in moving SOC forward."

Many of the activities were creative and encouraged participants to work together and look at situations in a new light.

"The training has been beneficial," said Missi Evans, Division of Family Services. "I'm learning tools to use as a foster care coordinator to create better collaboration between caseworkers, services providers, youth and foster parents."

CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEE OF THE FIRST QUARTER 2005

Joy D'Souza has been honored as the Children's Department Employee of the Quarter for the first quarter of 2005. A school-based Family Crisis Therapist at Lake Forest North Elementary School, D'Souza has improved the quality of life for the children and families in her care.

Joy D'Souza talks with students in her office about their recent accomplishments and their plans for the weekend.



In the four years she has worked in the Lake Forest School District, D'Souza has developed a long list of accomplishments. She was able to obtain over 80 winter coats for students in her school; she has embraced the system of care philosophy by partnering with the Division of Child Mental Health Services to provide day treatment services to several of her students; and she worked closely with a family in order to get advanced medical treatment for a student who suffered from severe seizures.

"Joy [exemplifies] what care and compassion mean," said Kay Stout, a family member of one of Joy's students. "She was a guardian angel when my family needed one. She is more than a social worker, she is a friend."

CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT EMPLOYEE OF THE SECOND QUARTER 2005

Nicole Rose, a Family Crisis Therapist with the Division of Family Services, has been recognized as the Department's Employee of the Quarter for the second quarter of 2005. It was her collaboration with the Milton Hershey School (MHS) that set Rose apart from the other nominees.



Jacob (left) is the first foster child in Delaware to be accepted into the prestigious Milton Hershey School. His admittance into the program was aided by Nicole Rose (right), the Department's Employee of the Second Quarter.

In its first partnership with the State, the prestigious school offered Jacob, a 12-year-old foster child from New Castle County, admission into its program. As the largest boarding school in the United States, MHS has been in operation for almost a century and currently serves 1,300 boys and girls in grades K-12 from families with the greatest financial and social needs.

As Jacob's permanency worker, Rose was instrumental in advocating for his admission. She worked with several key players in Jacob's life, including his guardian ad litem, foster mother, foster care social worker, guidance counselor and therapist, in order to sift through the acceptance process.

"When it looked like Jacob may not be accepted into the Hershey School, Nicky put her professional observations on the line and worked to gather information that made the case for admission," said George Read Middle School Guidance Counselor, Nick Fortuna. "She made all the difference."

CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT CELEBRATES SEPTEMBER AS RECOVERY MONTH

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Center for Substance Abuse Treatment has established September as National Recovery Month. On September 23, the Division of Child Mental Health Services (DCMHS) sponsored an event to honor this initiative, which focuses on national recognition and celebration of those recovering from addictions. The event was entitled "Building Resilience in Our Youth" and focused on critical elements of youth recovery—strength and courage. The event presented an opportunity to



Art designed by youth at Ferris was on display at a Recovery Month event hosted by CMH.

acknowledge the difficulty that youth face in making the changes necessary to sustain sobriety. It also recognized the talents and gifts that many have developed throughout that journey—including poetry read by young adults involved with the Crossroads Program and a display of over 20 pieces of artwork developed by youth at the Ferris School for Boys.

"Recovery month ties into our System of

Care philosophy by focusing on the strengths of those recovering from addictions," said Susan Cycyk, Director of DCMHS. "Building resilience is a holistic approach to strengthening the child in every aspect of his or her life; helping him or her to build the skills that will enable coping with life's many challenges and support growth into successful adulthood."

"The event also showcased the dedication and investment by our providers and the community in helping these youth find a life without drugs and/or alcohol. In addition to Crossroads, representatives from Aquila, SODAT, Open Door, Ferris Residential Treatment Center and the Adjudicated Drug Court program were present at the event with information regarding their programs."

You Say You Love Me

by Bradley J.

*You say you love me and that gives you the right
to make me face feelings
that I always fight.*

*The adult inside of me always begins to die
and just like when I was a baby
I want to cry.*

*But since then,
not even a spot of mist has touched my eyes
and not a second thought to you only me
whether I live or die.*

*So no choices can I make quite yet
Until such a time
I'm moving out, but I would still like to say,
that I love you MOM!*

BUILDING PARTNERSHIP'S FOR DELAWARE'S AT-RISK CHILDREN CONFERENCE

Nearly 400 Delawareans came together at Dover Downs on October 7th for a day-long conference, sponsored by the Child Protection Accountability Commission, which focused on the need for all professionals to work together to understand and meet the educational needs of children in foster care. Participants included judges, attorneys, educators, non-profit and advocacy organizations, foster parents, Department contract agencies and a large number of staff from the Children's Department.

Kathleen McNaught, Esquire, of the American Bar Association Center on Children and the Law opened the conference with a keynote address entitled, "Bridging Silos: Working Across Systems to Meet the Needs of At-Risk Children." She began with a moving video in which youth in foster care spoke for themselves about the trauma of placement and the stress and failure that comes from moving from school to school without adequate support.

"Statistics show that many youth in foster care are likely to be unemployed and/or homeless when they leave care unless they have acquired basic skills and an adequate education," cautioned McNaught, who also wrote "Learning Curves: Education Advocacy for Children in Foster Care."

Participants were able to attend three of 18 workshops on a wide variety of topics related to the education of children in foster care. Because the workshops were diverse, those involved discovered there is often a lack of understanding about the roles and regulations that guide each other's organizations. For example, educators and child welfare workers each have systems with rules about access to information and confidentiality that are often misunderstood across systems. These misunderstandings sometimes create delays in getting children enrolled in school and leave children struggling when support is most needed.

All through the day participants were challenged to understand each other's systems and to work together to go beyond systems' barriers to meet the real needs of real children and youth. The hope is as the Department and its partners continue to "Think of the Child First" they will all become advocates for the educational needs of children in foster care.



(L to R) Kathy Goldsmith of the Department of Education enjoys lunch with DSCYF employees Laura Miles and Janet Spina at the CPAC conference in Dover.

16TH ANNUAL VILLAGE AWARDS CALL FOR NOMINEES

Nominations are being solicited for the 16th Annual Village Awards. These awards celebrate the success of unpaid volunteers and spotlight the impact that various individuals, organizations, agencies and businesses have made in their communities in the field of prevention and early intervention in Delaware. To be eligible, nominees must have made a significant contribution in the following focus areas: Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect; Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Abuse and Delinquency and Recidivism; Promotion of Health and Wellness and Mental Health; and Family Strengthening Approaches.

Awards will be made in two categories:

Build the Village - for those who make an impact through planning, administering or leading prevention programs or efforts.

Live the Village - for those who are committed to working directly with participants in successful and effective prevention programming.

For nomination form, please contact: Sandy Clark - 302.892.4513.

TEAM SPIRIT AWARD

Teamwork is essential in order to accomplish the many goals of the Department.
About 1,200 persons throughout the state are responsible for numerous tasks throughout the day, month and year.

The "Team Spirit Award" strives to recognize a group of team members who have gone above the call of duty with enthusiasm and zest for their work.

Michael Jordan once said, "Talent wins games, but teamwork and intelligence wins championships." All three of these elements were put into play by the cross-divisional Foster Care RFP (Request for Proposal) team, whose members have been chosen to receive this quarter's team spirit award.

From November 2004 until April 2005, the seven member group solicited and reviewed proposals, ultimately awarding contracts for several different foster care services. The team was acting in response to departmental requirements, which incorporated recommendations from the Governor's Foster Care Task Force, as well as, principles derived from the System of Care philosophy.

"Our overall goal was to have an integrated service delivery system that thinks of the child first. The system should ensure that all children have a safe, nurturing place to live and grow, view families as active partners in services delivery, build on strengths, be culturally competent and provide informal supports and formal services to address the challenges children and families face,"



From left to right: Randy Wimberley, Keith Zirkle, Julia Pearce and Ryan Bolles are part of the seven-member Foster Care RFP team, which awarded contracts for several different foster care services. Not pictured are John Bates, Karen Triolo and Shirley Lerner.

said team member Karen Triolo (Office of Case Management).

The multidisciplinary team met the challenge of selecting contractors by agreeing to common goals and building consensus. Participation by Julia Pearce, executive director of the Child Placement Review Board, provided a balanced perspective to meet the needs of Delaware's at risk children.

"Everyone was extremely cooperative," said Randy Wimberley (Division of Child Mental Health Services). "All divisions and [Julia Pearce] worked well together. It was one of the best-run department-wide initiatives I have seen."

"It was a wonderful experience," added John Bates (Division of Family Services). "It was the way things should always happen. When you get a lot of diverse views, it goes a long way towards assuring that you will get a top-notch provider."

Other participants on the team included Ryan Bolles (Division of Management Support Services), Shirley Lerner (Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services) and Keith Zirkle (DFS).



FCTs BEGIN SCHOOL YEAR WITH PROJECTS, FIELD TRIPS, CHARITY EVENTS

"Not only did this reinforce my lessons in a different way, but it also acted as a self-esteem booster," Herbert-Perry said.
"It's something they worked on that produced tangible results."

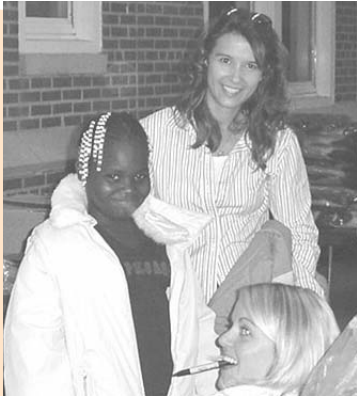


This September, Nancy Rybinski, FCT at Highlands Elementary School and coordinator of the school's safety patrol program, took six safety patrol members to the AAA Mid-Atlantic ribbon cutting ceremony at the Wilmington Riverfront. The students led the crowd of over seven hundred, which included Gov. Ruth Ann Minner and Wilmington's Mayor James Baker, in the pledge of allegiance. They also held the ends of the ribbon during the actual ribbon cutting ceremony.



Belvie Herbert-Perry, Family Crisis Therapist (FCT) at Carrie Downie Elementary School, recently published a book called "How to be Good at Carrie Downie." She involved students in the program and wrote about positive behaviors, problem solving responsibilities and manners.

Christina Keeler, FCT at Georgetown Elementary School, and Christine Meehan of Communities in Schools DE, contacted several businesses, county government agencies and individuals in the community to solicit donations for a coat drive. The two collected over \$3,700 and used the money to purchase over 300 coats through Operation Warm. The school held a distribution event on Oct. 17, where more than 200 coats were handed out to students and their families.



MISSION STATEMENT

OUR MISSION IS TO PROVIDE LEADERSHIP AND ADVOCACY FOR DELAWARE'S CHILDREN.
OUR PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY IS TO PROVIDE AND MANAGE A RANGE OF SERVICES FOR CHILDREN WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED ABANDONMENT, ABUSE, ADJUDICATION, MENTAL ILLNESS, NEGLECT OR SUBSTANCE ABUSE; AND WE ENDORSE A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO ENABLE CHILDREN TO REACH THEIR FULLEST POTENTIAL.

VISION STATEMENT

OUR VISION IS TO THINK OF THE CHILD FIRST!
WE WANT EVERY CHILD TO BE SAFE AND HAVE STABILITY, SELF-ESTEEM, AND A SENSE OF HOPE. THE DELAWARE CHILDREN'S DEPARTMENT WILL LEAD A SYSTEM OF CARE (BOTH COMMUNITY BASED AND RESIDENTIAL) THAT IS CHILD CENTERED AND ASSURES EFFECTIVE, TIMELY AND APPROPRIATE SUPPORT FOR DELAWARE'S CHILDREN. WE WILL ACHIEVE OUR MISSION WHEN FAMILIES, STAFF, COMMUNITY PARTNERS, AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS THINK OF THE CHILD FIRST. OUR ACTIVITIES INCLUDE PREVENTION, EARLY INTERVENTION, ASSESSMENT, TREATMENT, PERMANENCY, AND AFTER CARE. THE DEPARTMENT WILL OFFER DESIRABLE CAREER OPPORTUNITIES, ATTRACTING AND RETAINING PROUD AND TALENTED EMPLOYEES WHO ARE MOTIVATED TO THINK OF THE CHILD FIRST IN ALL THAT THEY DO.

TO REPORT CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT, CALL THE 24-HOUR REPORT LINE:

1-800-292-9582

For information on becoming a foster parent, call the Delaware Helpline:
1-800-464-4357

"Seen and Heard" is the quarterly newsletter of the Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families (The Delaware Children's Department).

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